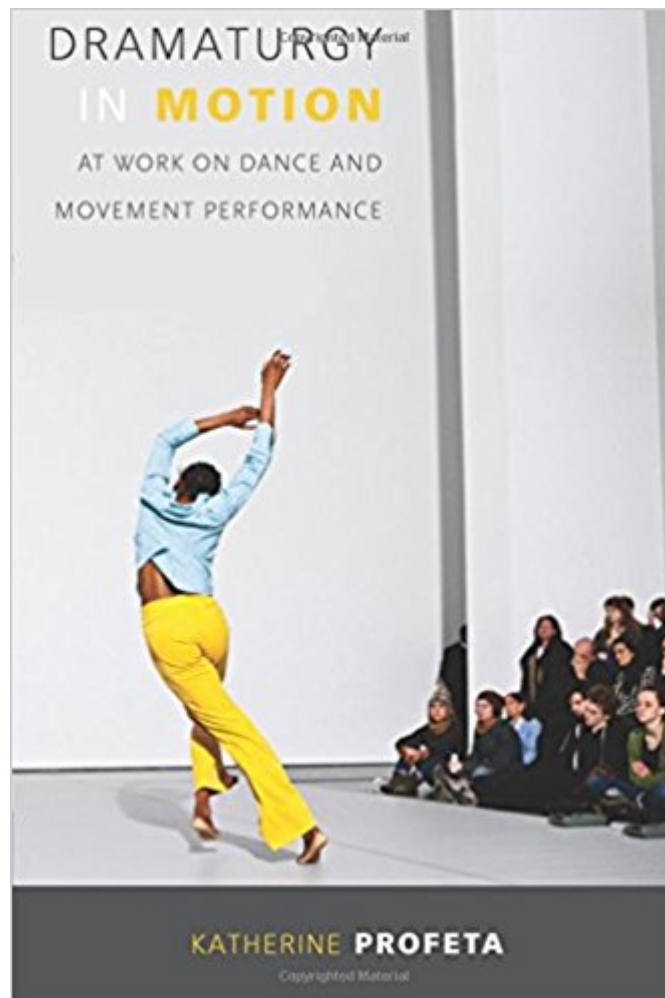




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Dramaturgy In Motion: At Work On Dance And Movement Performance (Studies In Dance History)



Synopsis

Dramaturgy in Motion innovatively examines the work of the dramaturg in contemporary dance and movement performance. Katherine Profeta, a working dramaturg for more than fifteen years, shifts the focus from asking “Who is the dramaturg?” to “What does the dramaturg think about?” Profeta explores five arenas for the dramaturg’s attention: text and language, research, audience, movement, and interculturalism. Drawing on her extended collaboration with choreographer and visual artist Ralph Lemon, she grounds her thinking in actual rehearsal-room examples and situates practice within theoretical discourse about contemporary dramaturgy. Moving between theory and practice, word and movement, question and answer until these distinctions blur, she develops the foundational concept of dramaturgical labor as a quality of motion.

Dramaturgy in Motion will be invaluable to practitioners and scholars interested in the processes of creating contemporary dance and movement performance—particularly artists wondering what it might be like to collaborate with a dramaturg and dramaturgs wondering what it might be like to collaborate on movement performance. The book will also appeal to those intrigued by the work of Lemon and his collaborators, to which Profeta turns repeatedly to unfold the thorny questions and rich benefits of dramaturgical labor.

Book Information

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“Finally an answer to that vexed question, ‘What is dance dramaturgy?’
This is a brilliantly nuanced account of a new role in contemporary performance, drawing on an extended collaboration but relevant for the entire field.”
•Susan Manning, Northwestern University
“In five compelling chapters text and language, research, audience, movement, interculturality
•Dramaturgy in Motion provides a practical resource, equally valuable for theatre dramaturgs and devisers as it will be for dance dramaturgs and choreographers.”
•DD Kugler, Simon Fraser University
“Compellingly narrates the urgent craft of dramaturgical creativity in dance with this graceful account of a decades-long collaboration with multi-modal artist Ralph Lemon. Essential reading for understanding how art is made, and why it matters.”
•Thomas F. DeFrantz, Duke University
“Draws theater and dance, dramaturgical practice and theory into exhilarating new relationships. By creating these partnerships and patterns for our elusive field, Profeta has enriched the way I think about, discuss, and, indeed, go about my own work.”
•Catherine Sheehy, Yale School of Drama and Yale Repertory Theater
“Dramaturgy in Motion should be read by everyone with a stake in this gorgeously troublesome endeavor we call performance. On every page of this deeply generous work there is something to provoke, to reassure, to challenge, to question and always, to savor.”
•Claudia La Rocco, School of Visual Arts, New York City
“Lays out the bigger historical picture as well as the nitty-gritty realities of a working dance dramaturg. There is also much to think about in terms of developing a dramaturgical point of view as a tool that could be useful for the whole team of collaborators, including the dancers.”
•Dance International
“This deeply introspective, exquisitely researched book advances the field.”
•Dance Chronicle

Katherine Profeta is an assistant professor in the Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance at Queens College of the City University of New York. She has been the dramaturg for choreographer and visual artist Ralph Lemon since 1997, as well as for numerous other choreographers and theater companies. She is also a founding member and choreographer with the theater company Elevator Repair Service.

This book is a tremendous overview of and deep dive into dramaturgy, in particular how it relates to contemporary choreography. Profeta uses her own extensive experience collaborating with the acclaimed Ralph Lemon to talk through the history of dramaturgy and the role of the dramaturg in

service of the work (as research source, living memory, sounding board, creative prompt). Much of the writing is drawn from Profeta's project journals, and that material is grounded in a scholarly literature review. I've been thinking about "kinesthetic empathy" and "target culture" and so many other topics continuously since I read it. And despite the focus on dance, the book's applications are widespread. (I came to it primarily interested in sound, and in sound's role in other fields such as dance, but also film, among other areas.) At its heart, Profeta's book can be thought of as being about the art of collaboration (both one-on-one, and in groups), about the roles we play, the roles we swap, and the work that goes into a successful partnership.

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